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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to determine the degree to which the educational and employment plans of high school seniors corresponded to the actual activities in which these persons were engaged 1 year after high school. Data were gathered from a follow-up survey of 16,965 graduates of Minnesota high schools from the classes of 1979 and 1980. The findings showed no differences between classes. Slightly over 80 percent of high school seniors had plans to pursue education after high school, but only 62 percent of them were involved in educational activity 1 year after high school. Only 53 percent were engaged in the type of education they had planned. Of the people planning to attend colleges or universities, approximately 75 percent were enrolled 1 year after high school, while 45 percent of those who planned to attend community colleges actually did so. Forty percent of those who planned to go to vocational schools were enrolled. Of those with employment-related plans, 72 percent were involved in these areas 1 year after high school. Only 54 percent were engaged in the type of employment activity planned, and only 63 percent of those who had planned to have paid jobs actually did 1 year after high school. Conslusions show that the degree of correspondence between stated plans of high school seniors and their actual activities 1 year after high school varies greatly according to the type of planned activity. The overall correspondence between planned and actual activities were less than 50 percent. (KC)

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PLANS VERSUS ACTUAL POST HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Classes of 1979 and 1980, One Year Later

A Report of the
Minnesota Secondary School
Follow-Up System

By
Donald E. Irvin

April, 1982

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Preface	4
Introduction	5
Educational Plans of High School Seniors	6
Employment Plans of High School Seniors	7
Educational Activities of Those Planning to Attend Vocational Schools	8
Employment Activities of Those Planning to Attend Vocational Schools	9
Educational Activities of Those Planning to Attend Community Colleges	10
Employment Activities of Those Planning to Attend Community Colleges	11
Educational Activities of Those Planning to Attend Colleges and Universities	12
Employment Activities of Those Planning to Attend Colleges and Universities	13
Educational Activities of Those Planning to Enter Apprenticeships	14
Employment Activites of Those Planning to Enter Apprenticeships	15
Educational Activiites of Those Planning Other Types of Education	16
Employment Activities of Those Planning To Enter Other types of Education	17
Educational Activities of Those Without Educational Plans	18
Employment Activities of Those Without Educational Plans	19
Summary of Educational Plans Versus Educational Activities	20
Employment Activities of Those Planning to be Unemployed	21
Educational Activities of Those Planning to be Unemployed	22
Employment Activities of Those Planning to be Homemakers	23
Educational Activities of Those Planning to be Homemakers	24
Employment Activities of Those Planning Military Service	25
Educational Activites of Those Planning Military Service	26
Employment Activites of Those Planning Paid Employment	27
Educational Activities of Those Planning to be Employed	28
Summary of Employment Plans Versus Actual Employment Activities	29
General Summary and Conclusions	30

PREFACE

The data in this report were supplied by the Minnesota High School Follow-Up System. This system was designed to gather information from and about former Minnesota High School students. Two components of the system supplied the data. First, data concerning the post high school plans of students were obtained with the career planning survey component and second, actual post high school activities data were collected with the follow-up component of the system.

The career planning survey instrument was administered to high school seniors approximately one month before graduation from high school. The purpose of this survey was to identify the planned post high school activities of these students. Respondents were asked to identify their planned activity in both educational and employment areas.

The follow-up questionnaire was administered, by mail, approximately one year following graduation from high school. The purpose of this survey was to identify the actual post high school activities in which the respondents were engaged one year after high school.

Both of these system components were available for use and were administered to a sample of individuals in the graduating classes of 1979 and 1980. It should be noted that these samples were strictly voluntary and care in generalizing these results should be exercised.

Upon completion of the data collection efforts, responses to both components were matched by individual. This process resulted in samples of 8,123 from the class of 1979 and 8,742 from the class of 1980.

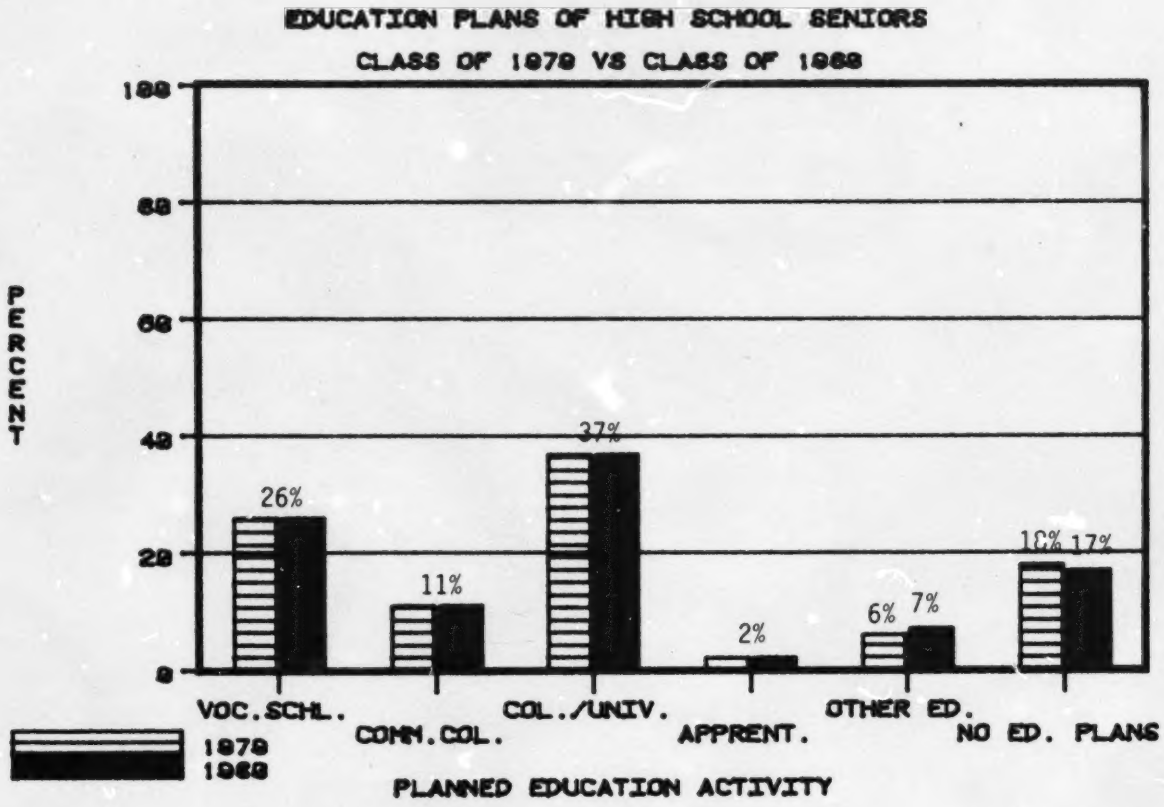
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to present a summary of information which indicates the degree to which the planned activities of high school seniors corresponds with their actual activities one year after graduation from high school. These data should be useful to individuals responsible for planning and recruiting for post secondary educational institutions and for individuals responsible for planning and evaluating secondary school programs.

The data presented in this report represents two different graduating classes and therefore can form the foundation for analysis of trends over time. However, data from more graduating classes should be collected before any projections are made.

The remainder of this report presents data which indicate: (1) The plans of the individuals from the classes of 1979 and 1980, and (2) the corresponding actual activities of these individuals one year later.

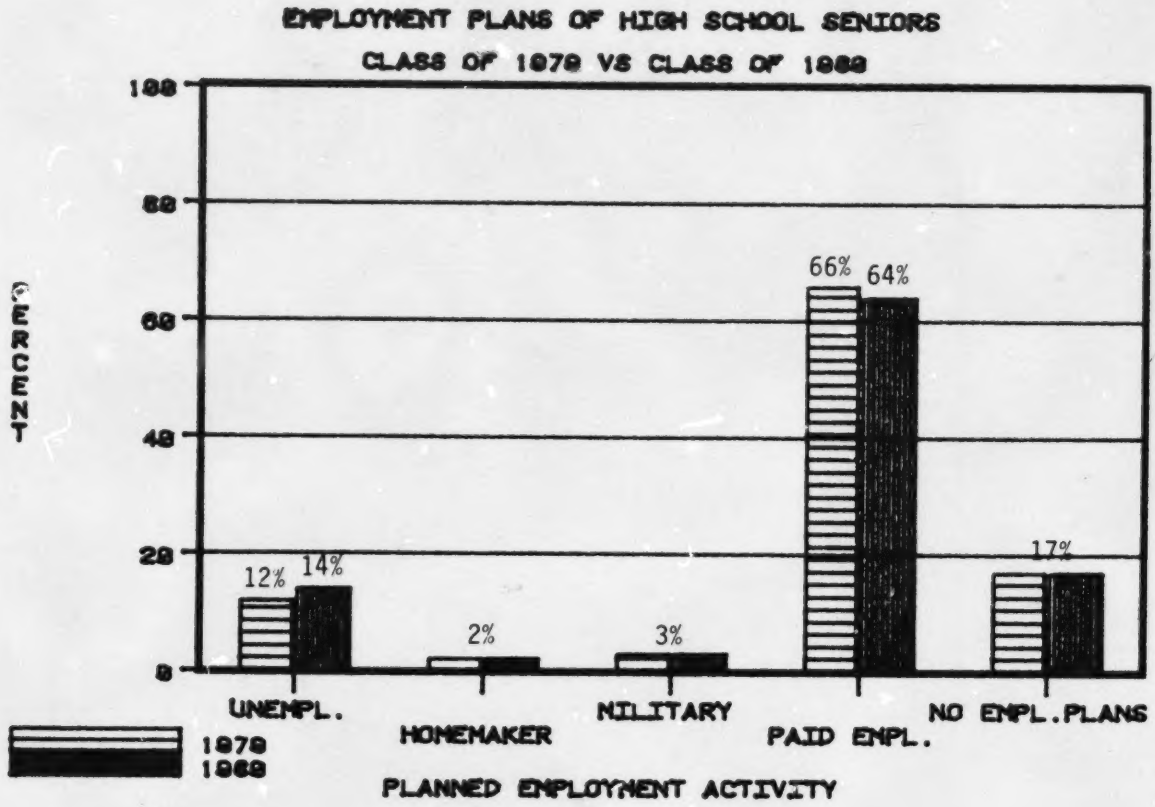
Figure 1



Educational Plans of High School Seniors

One of the two primary areas of post high school activity is further education. For the class of 1979, 82 percent or 6,653 individuals expressed plans to pursue some type of education after high school. For the class of 1980, 83 percent or 7,245 individuals had educational plans. The distribution of these plans is shown in Figure 1. As can be seen the proportions planning vocational school, community colleges, colleges or universities, and apprenticeships were nearly the same for both graduating classes.

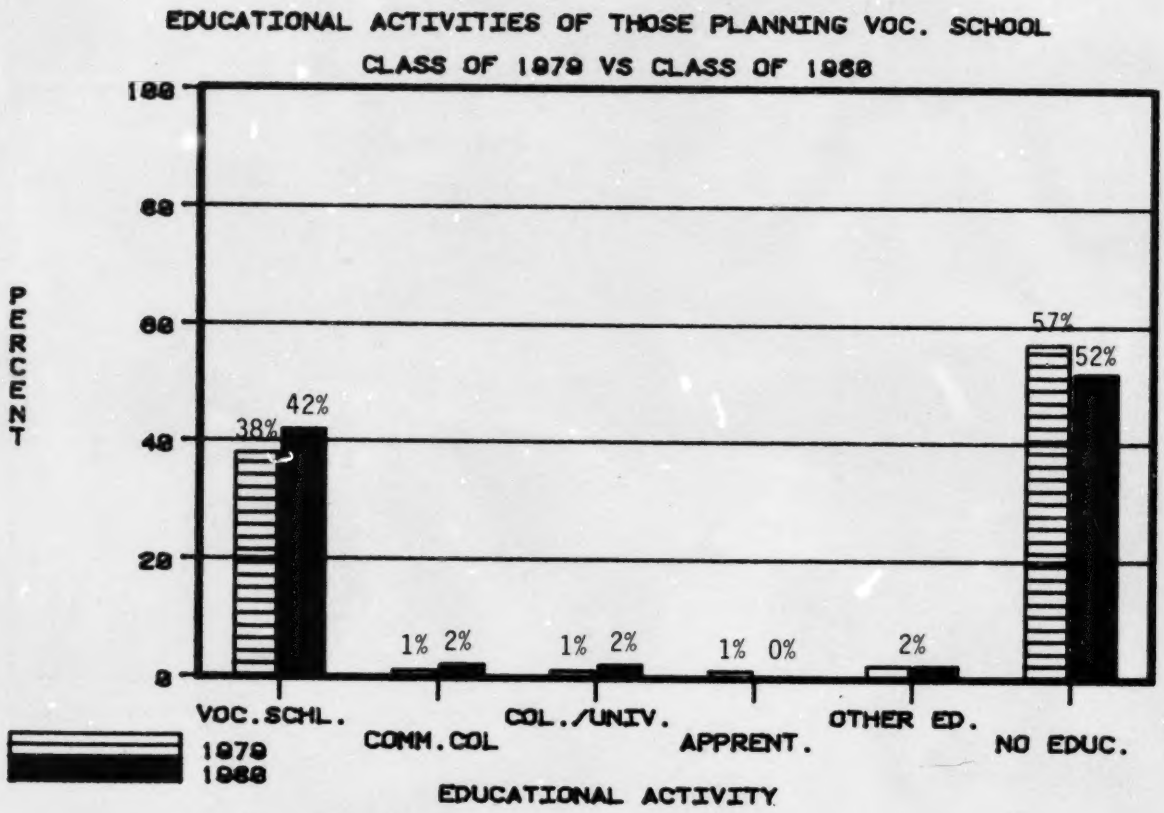
Figure 2



Employment Plans of High School Seniors

The post high school employment plans of the students in the classes of 1979 and 1980 are presented in Figure 2 above. In both classes 83% of the students indicated plans to be involved in at least one of the employment categories. This represents 6,710 individuals from the class of 1979 and 7,246 individuals from the class of 1980. And again, as was the case for educational plans the proportions in each class selecting each activity were very similar. In this case, the unemployment and paid employment categories each varied by 2 percent between the two years.

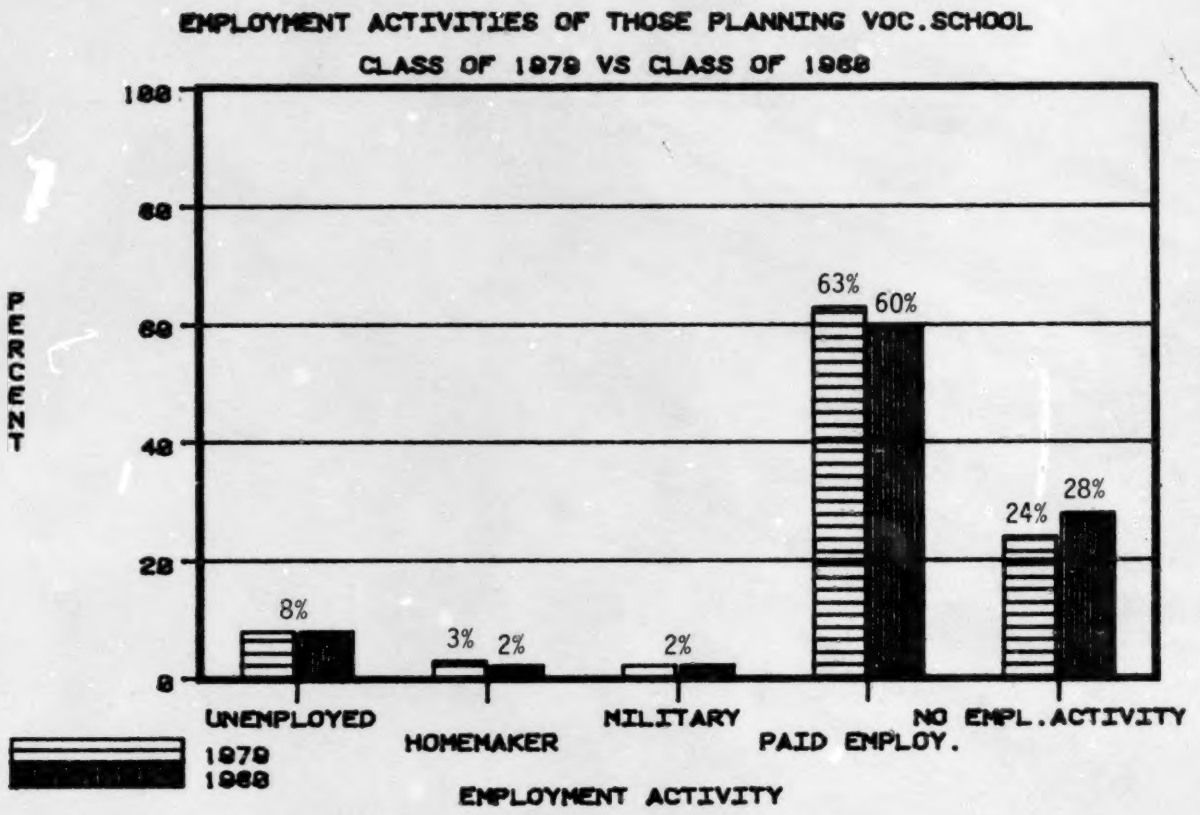
Figure 3



Educational Activities of Those Planning to Attend Vocational Schools

In both of the graduating classes included in this report, 26 percent of the students (2,140 for 1979 and 2,279 for 1980) stated plans to attend vocational schools one year after high school. Of these groups, 38 percent of the class of 1979 and 42 percent of the class of 1980 who planned to attend vocational schools were actually enrolled one year later. From the same groups, 57 percent and 52 percent, respectively, were not enrolled in any type of education while 5 percent and 6 percent, respectively, were enrolled in other educational activities.

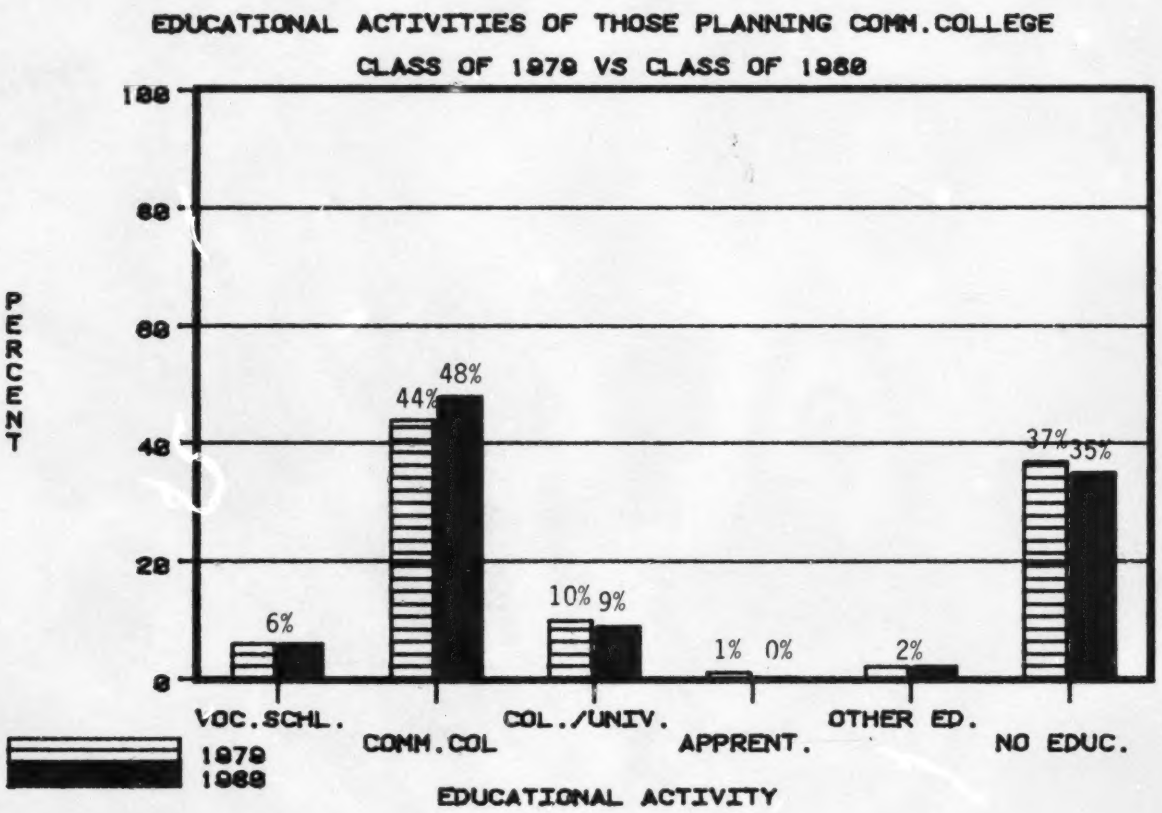
Figure 4



Employment Activities of Those Planning to Attend Vocational Schools

In addition to educational activities, individuals who planned to attend vocational schools also engaged in employment related activities. The proportions engaged in these activities are shown in Figure 4. As was the case with education activities, the variation between the classes of 1979 and 1980 are small.

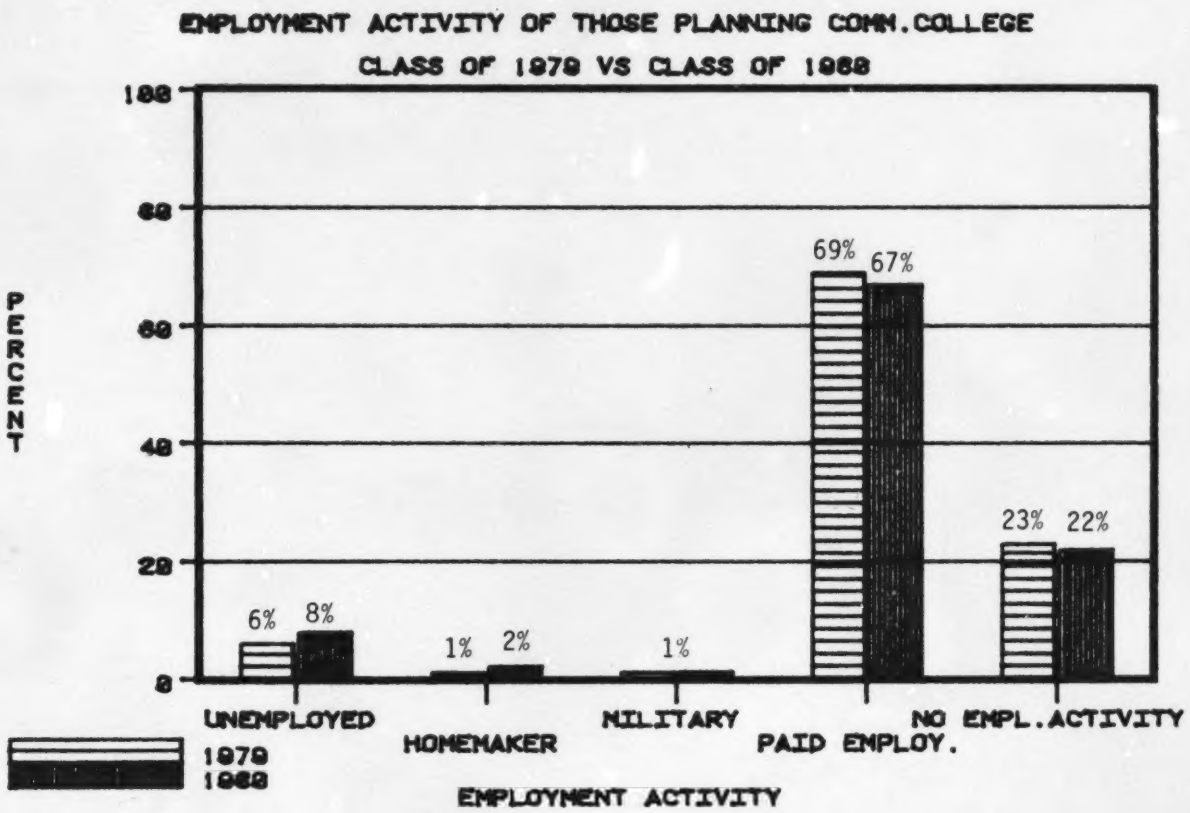
Figure 5



Educational Activities of Those Planning to Attend Community Colleges

Eleven percent of both of the classes (853 for 1979 and 943 for 1980) indicated plans to attend community colleges after high school. Of these groups, 44 percent from the class of 1979 and 48 percent from the class of 1980 actually attended community colleges. From the same groups, 19 percent and 17 percent, respectively, attended other types of schools while 37 percent and 35 percent did not attend schools.

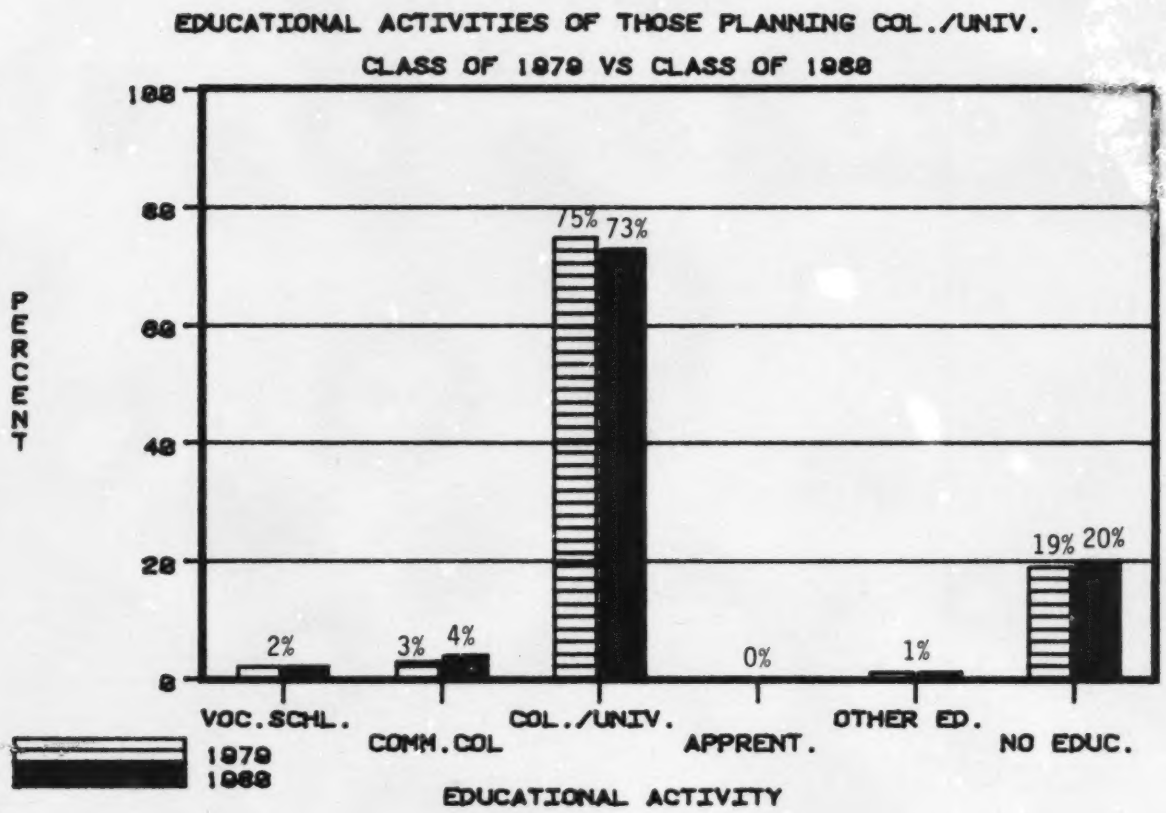
Figure 6



Employment Activities of Those Planning to Attend Community Colleges

The employment activities of those planning to attend community colleges are displayed in Figure 6. As evidenced in Figure 6, the proportions from both classes were very similar in their post high school employment activities.

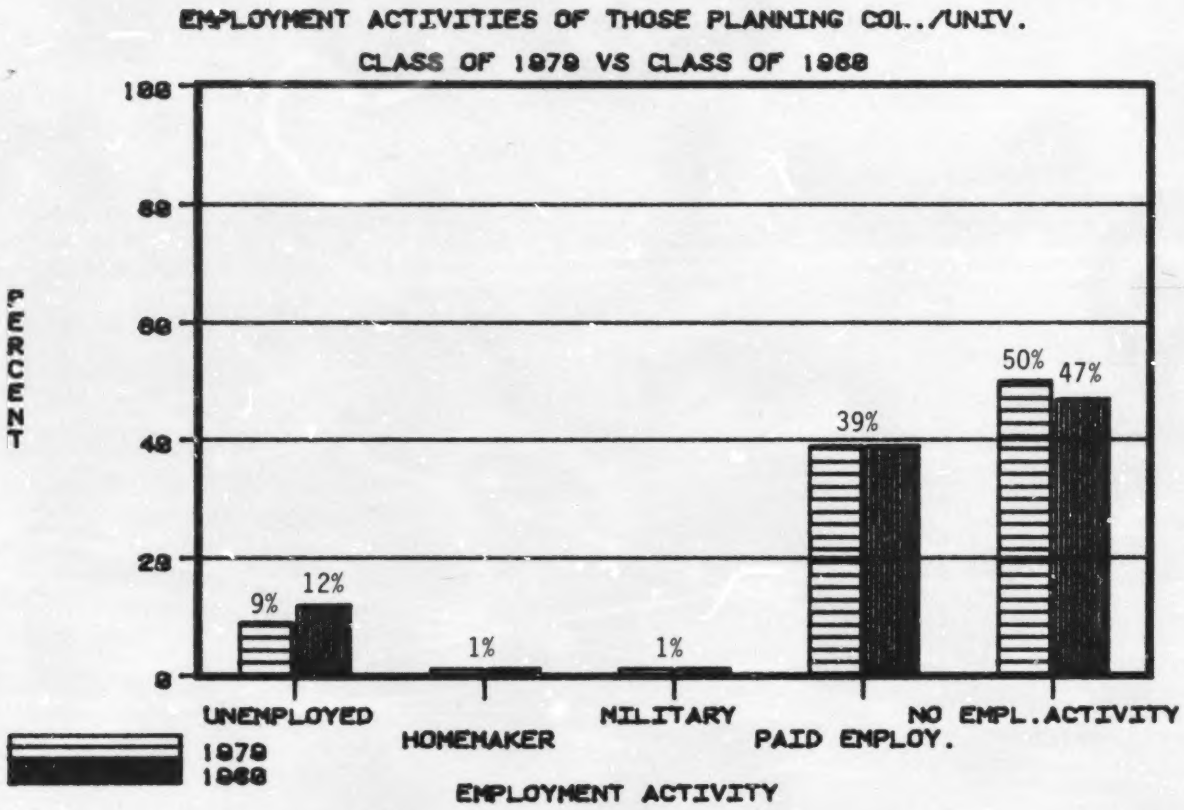
Figure 7



Educational Activities of Those Planning to Attend Colleges and Universities

As shown in Figure 7, 75 percent of the 3,027 students from the class of 1979 and 73 percent of the 3,215 students from the class of 1980 who planned to attend colleges and universities were enrolled in these types of schools one year after high school. Only 19 percent and 20 percent, respectively, of the students planning college or university did not attend some type of school.

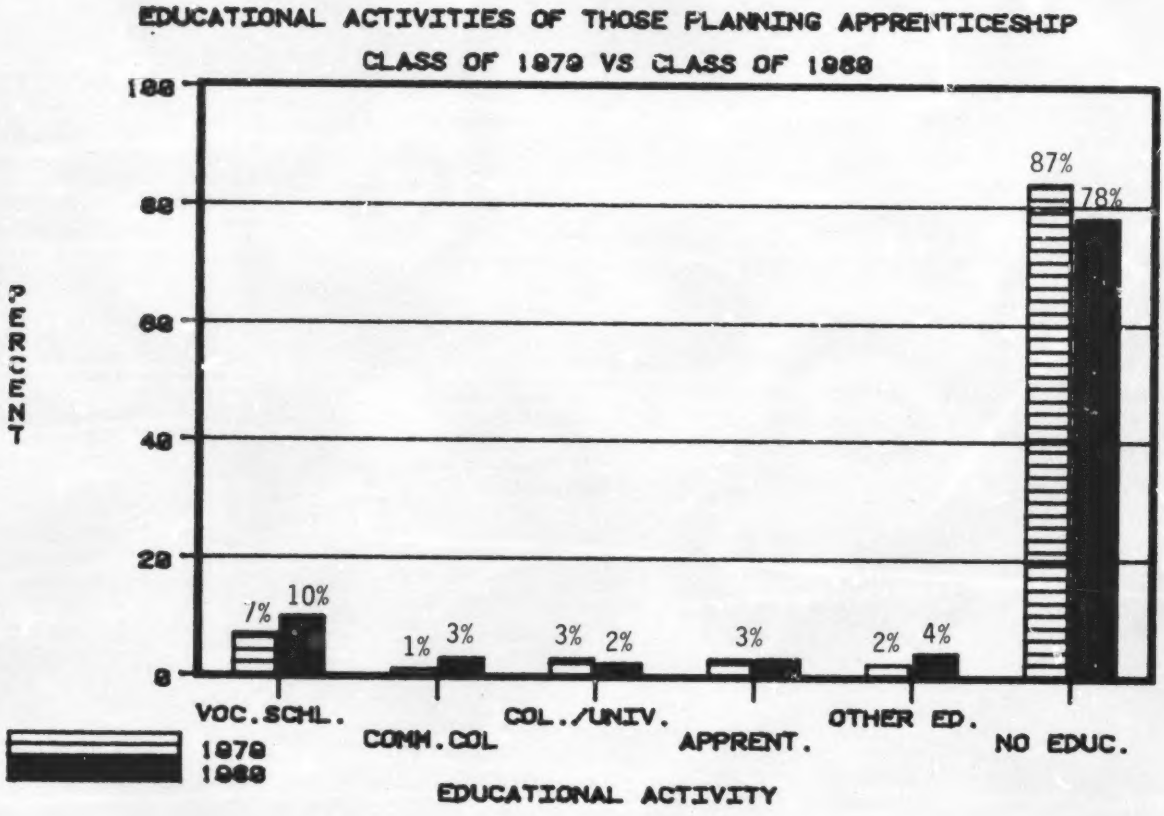
Figure 8



Employment Activities of Those Planning to Attend Colleges and Universities

As seen in Figure 8, 39 percent of the individuals from both classes who planned to attend colleges or universities were engaged in paid employment while 50 percent and 47 percent, respectively, did not report any employment activity. And, only a slightly higher proportion were unemployed, 12 percent for the class of 1980 as compared to 9 percent for the class of 1979.

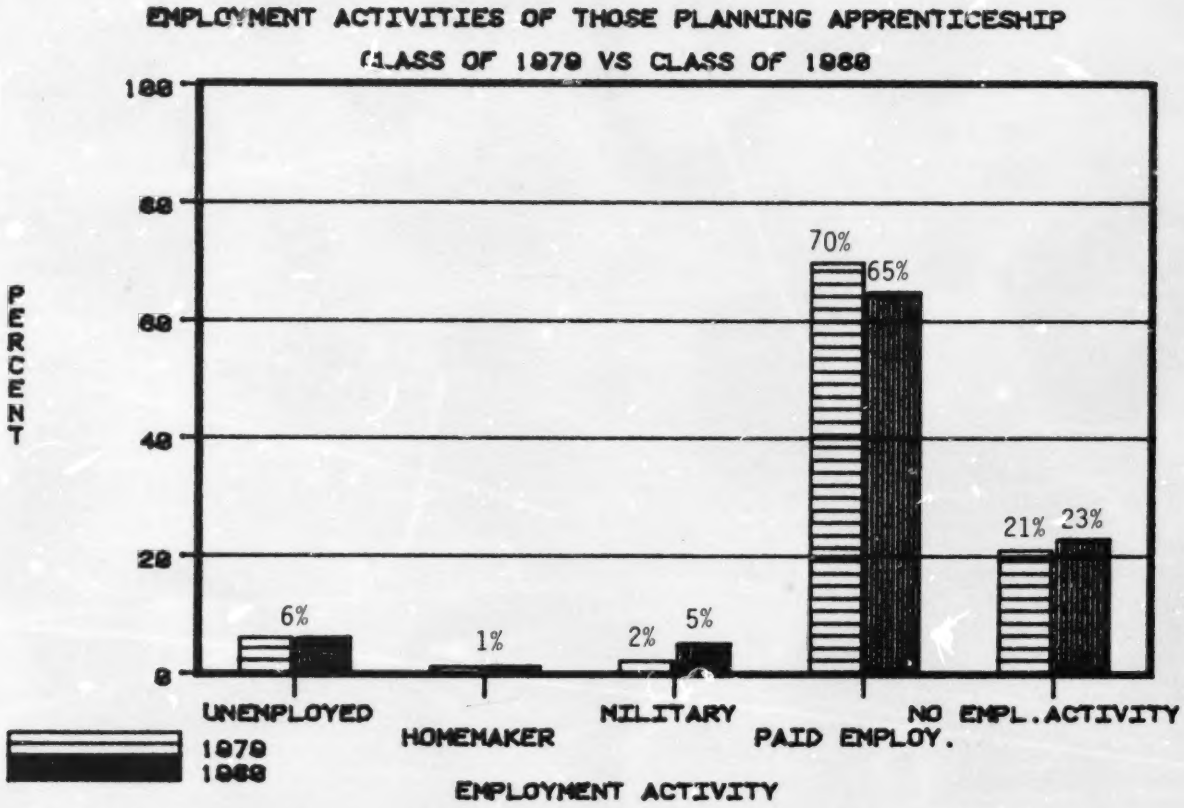
Figure 9



Educational Activities of Those Planning to Enter Apprenticeships

Of the total planning to attend some type of education only 3 percent of each class planned to be in apprenticeship training (184 for 1979 and 216 for 1980). Three percent of the individuals in both graduating classes who planned to enter apprenticeship training programs actually entered these programs. This percentage was the lowest of all of the education categories. That is, a smaller percentage of people planning, actually entered in this category than in any of the other education categories. There was, however, a slight increase across the two years in the percentage attending other types of educational institutions (i.e., 13 percent in 1979 and 19 percent in 1980).

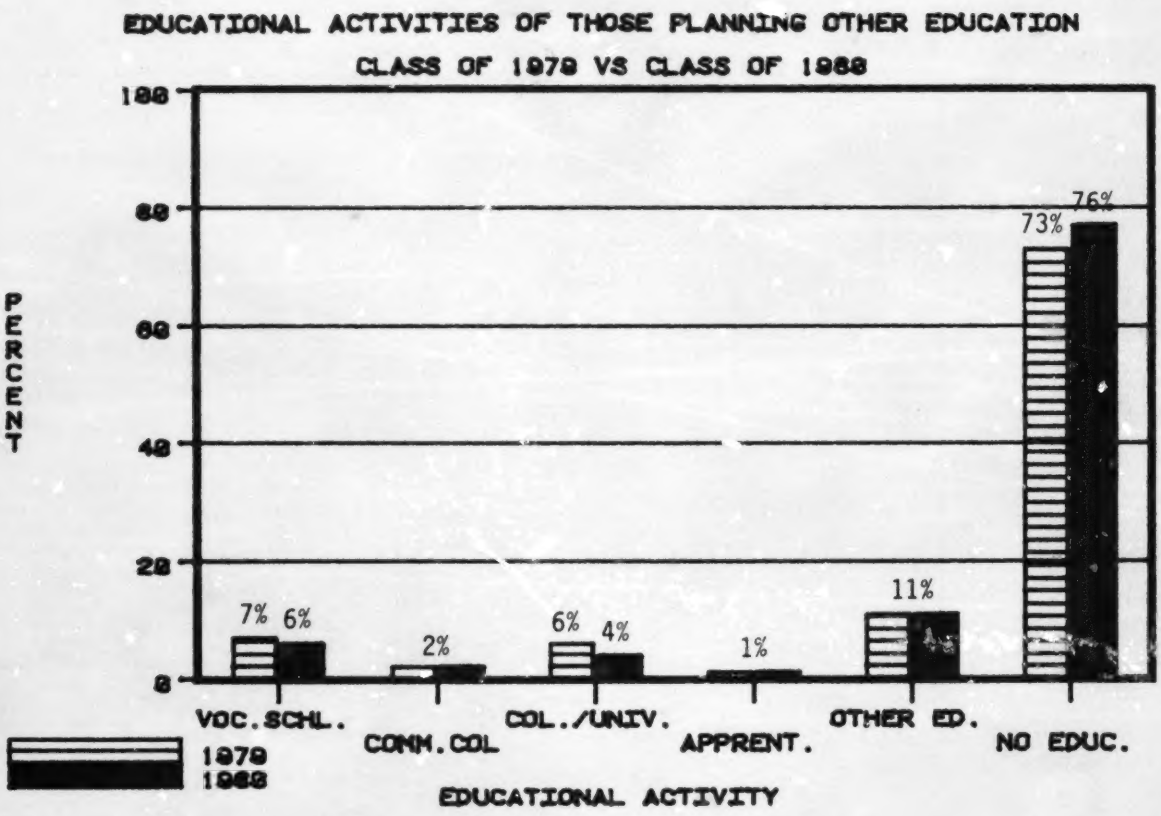
Figure 10



Employment Activities of Those Planning to Enter Apprenticeships

The employment activities of the individuals who planned to be apprentices are shown in Figure 10. The primary differences in this group between the classes of 1979 and 1980 can be found in the proportions entering the m litary, a 3 percent increase for 1980 over 1979, and those entering paid employment, a 5 percent decrease for 1980 over 1979.

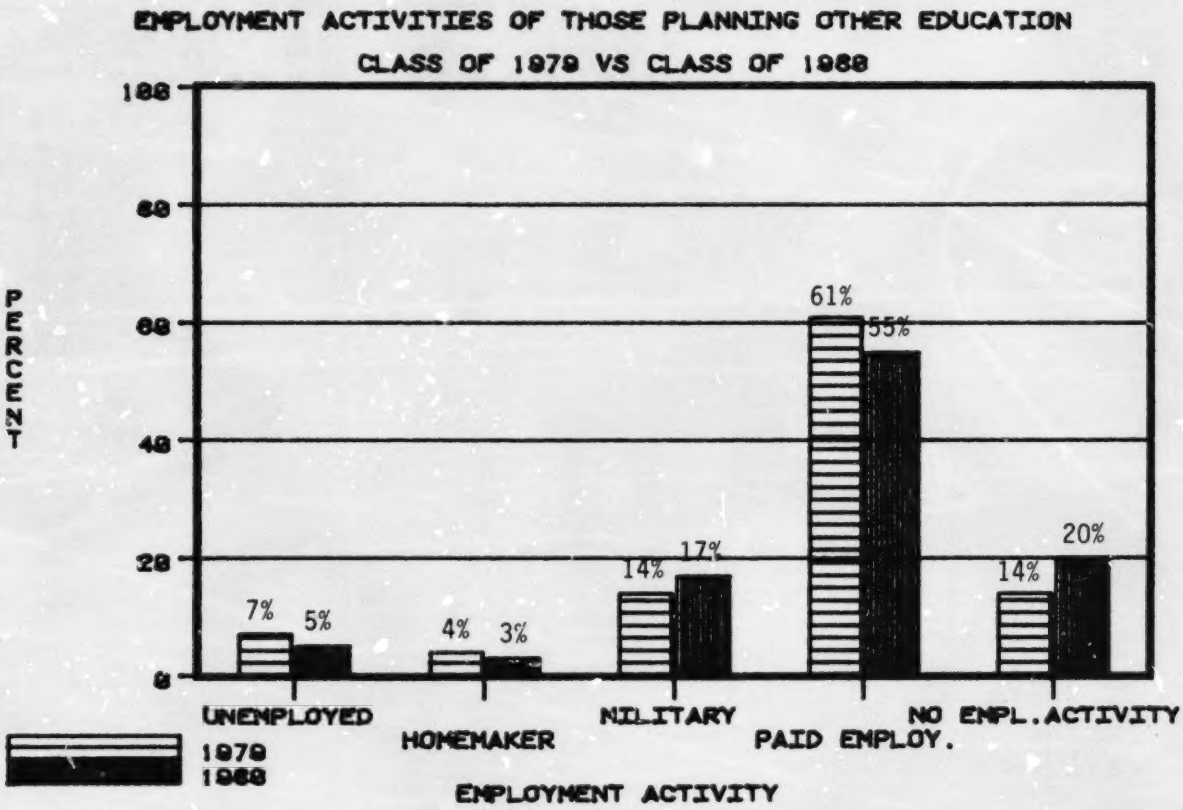
Figure 11



Educational Activities of Those Planning Other Types of Education

Of the individuals from the classes of 1979 and 1980 who had education plans, 7 percent (449) and 8 percent (592), respectively, had plans for other types of education. Of the individuals who planned to pursue other types of education 11 percent in both years actually entered schools in this category. Those entering the remaining categories were relatively constant as were the proportions not pursuing any type of education.

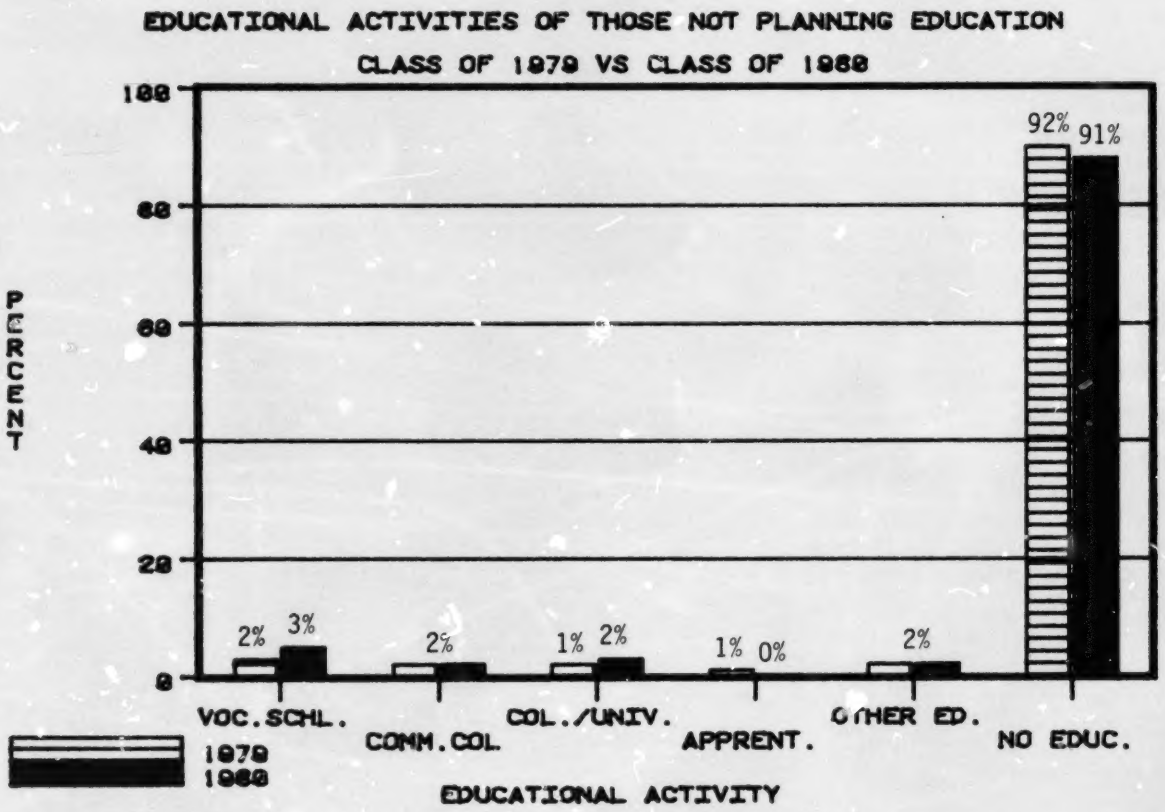
Figure 12



Employment Activities of Those Planning To Enter Other Types of Education

The employment activities of the individuals from the classes of 1979 and 1980 who planned to enter "other types" of education are shown in Figure 12. As shown in this figure, a slightly larger proportion of the class of 1980 who planned "other education" were in the military or reported no employment activity. A slightly larger proportion of the students from the class of 1979 reported being involved in paid employment.

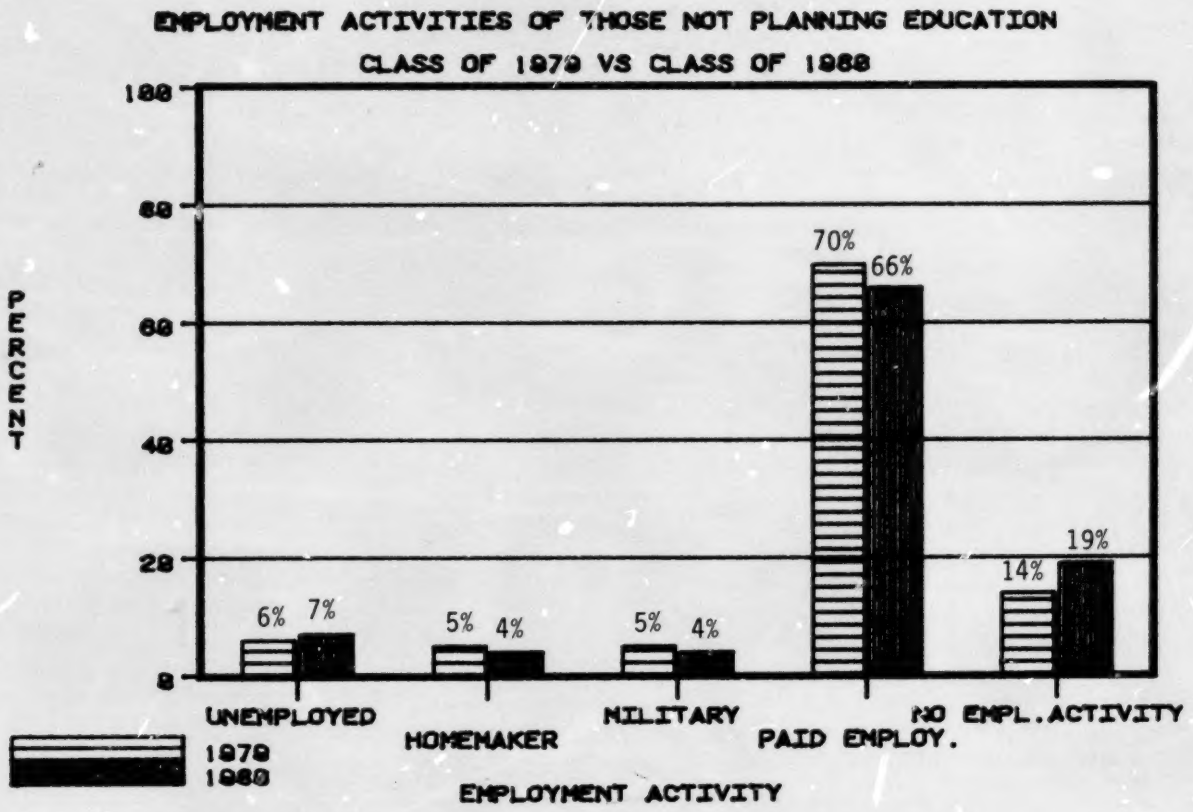
Figure 13



Educational Activities of Those Without Educational Plans

Totals of 1,470 or 18 percent and 1,497 or 17 percent of the classes of 1979 and 1980, respectively, had no plans to continue their education after high school. As seen in Figure 13, there is no more than a 1 percent difference between 1979 and 1980 in the proportions of those who had no plans for education but entered one of the education categories.

Figure 14



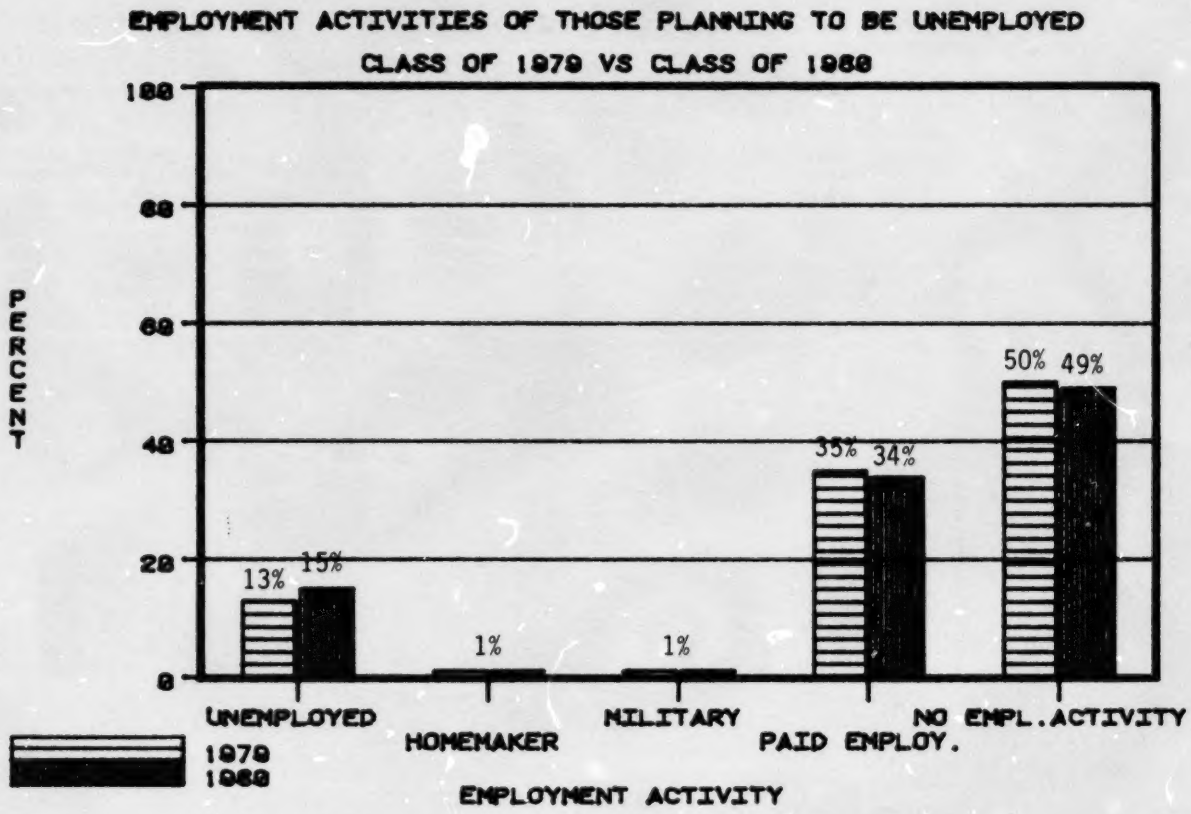
Employment Activities of Those Without Educational Plans

The proportions shown in Figure 14 indicate a slightly larger proportion of those from the class of 1979 with no plans for continuing their education were employed (70 percent versus 66 percent). And a slightly smaller proportion of this group was not engaged in any of the employment activities (14 percent versus 19 percent) than from a corresponding group from the class of 1980.

SUMMARY OF EDUCATIONAL PLANS VERSUS EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The data reported indicates that 82 percent of the class of 1979, and 83 percent of the class of 1980 expressed plans to pursue some type of education one year after high school. Of those individuals who planned to pursue some type of post high school education, 62 percent of each class actually attended. Further, 53 percent of the individuals from each class actually attended the type of institution they had planned to attend while 9 percent attended school but not the type they had planned. The group most likely to pursue this planned education comprised those who planned college or university (75 percent in 1979 and 73 percent in 1980). In all other groups, less than 50 percent of the individuals pursued the type of education they had planned to pursue.

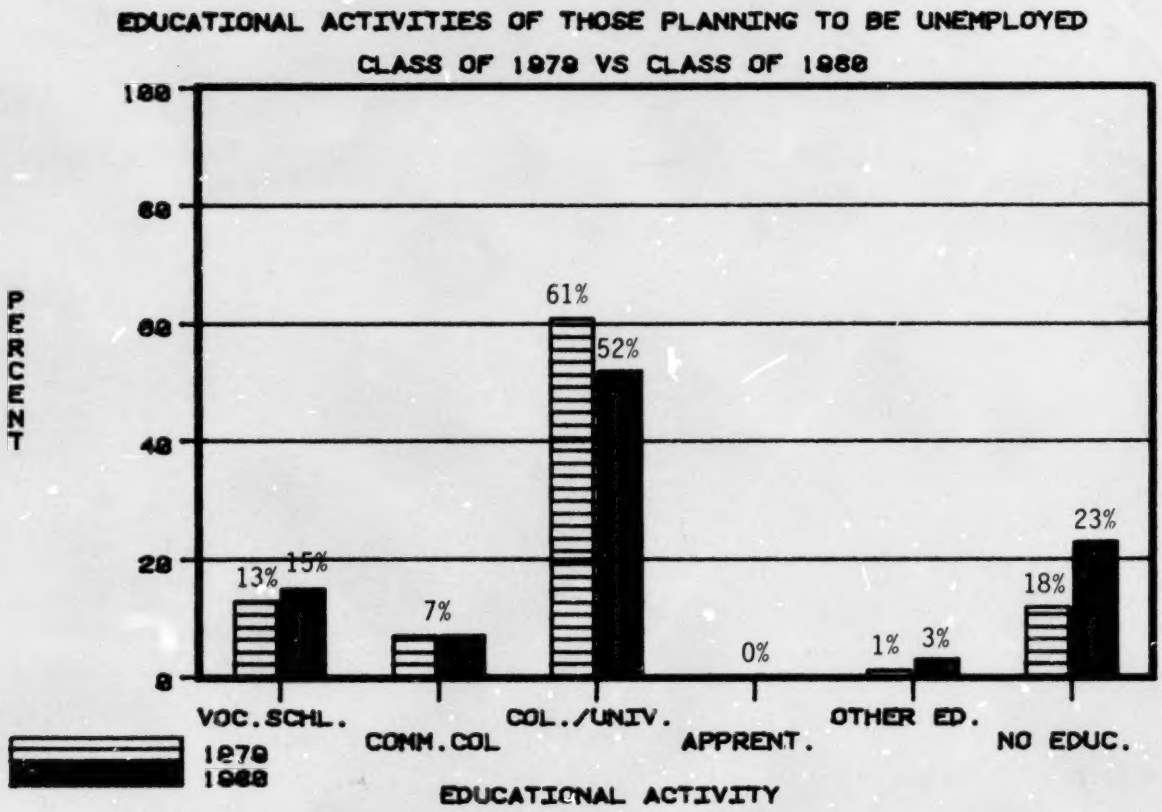
Figure 15



Employment Activities of Those Planning to be Unemployed

Totals of 933 or 12 percent of the class of 1979 and 1,216 or 14 percent of the class of 1980 indicated they had plans to be unemployed one year after high school. The employment related activities of those students who indicated plans to be unemployed are shown in Figure 15. As can be seen in this figure, there was little difference between classes in these activities. Approximately 50 percent of each class were not involved in any of the employment related activities and only 13 percent and 15 percent of the classes of 1979 and 1980, respectively, were unemployed as planned.

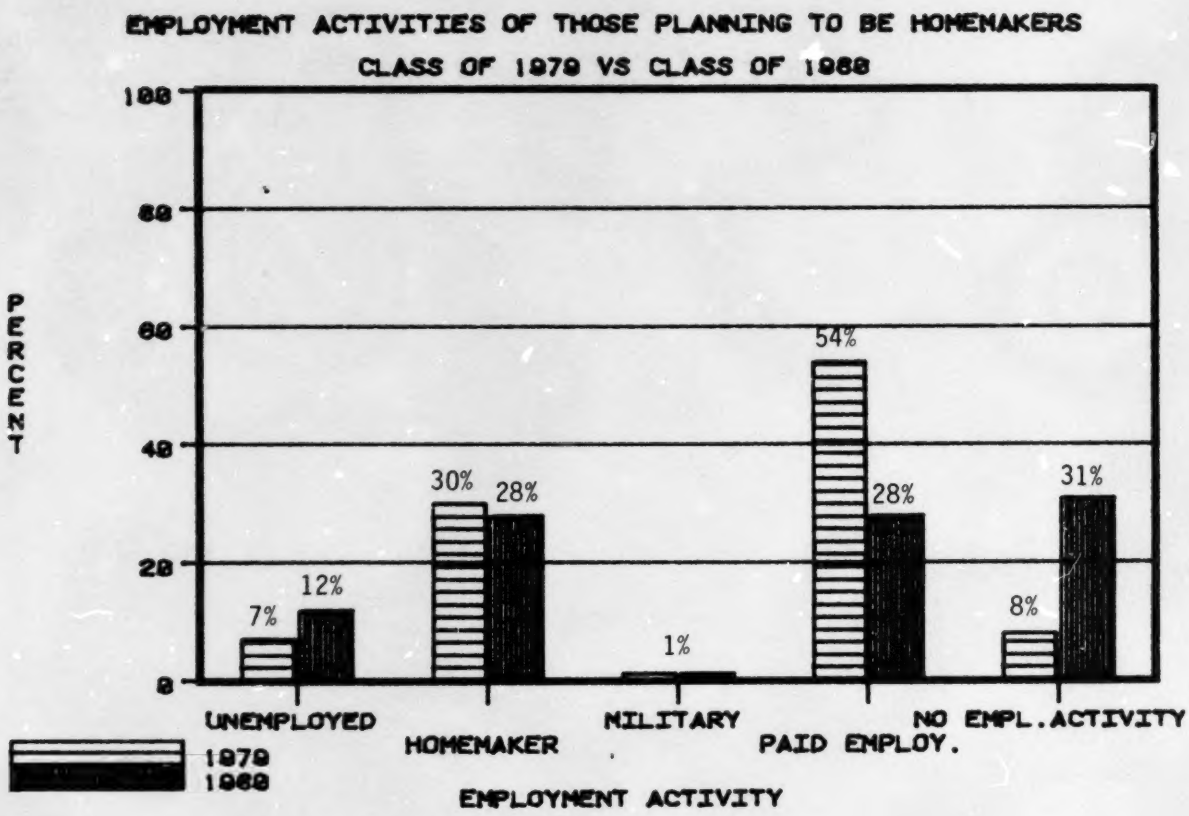
Figure 16



Educational Activities of Those Planning to be Unemployed

The educational activities of those from the classes of 1979 and 1980 who planned to be unemployed are shown in Figure 16. As can be seen in this figure, the majority of this group from both classes attended school (82 percent in 1979 and 77 percent in 1980). And most of these individuals attended colleges or universities.

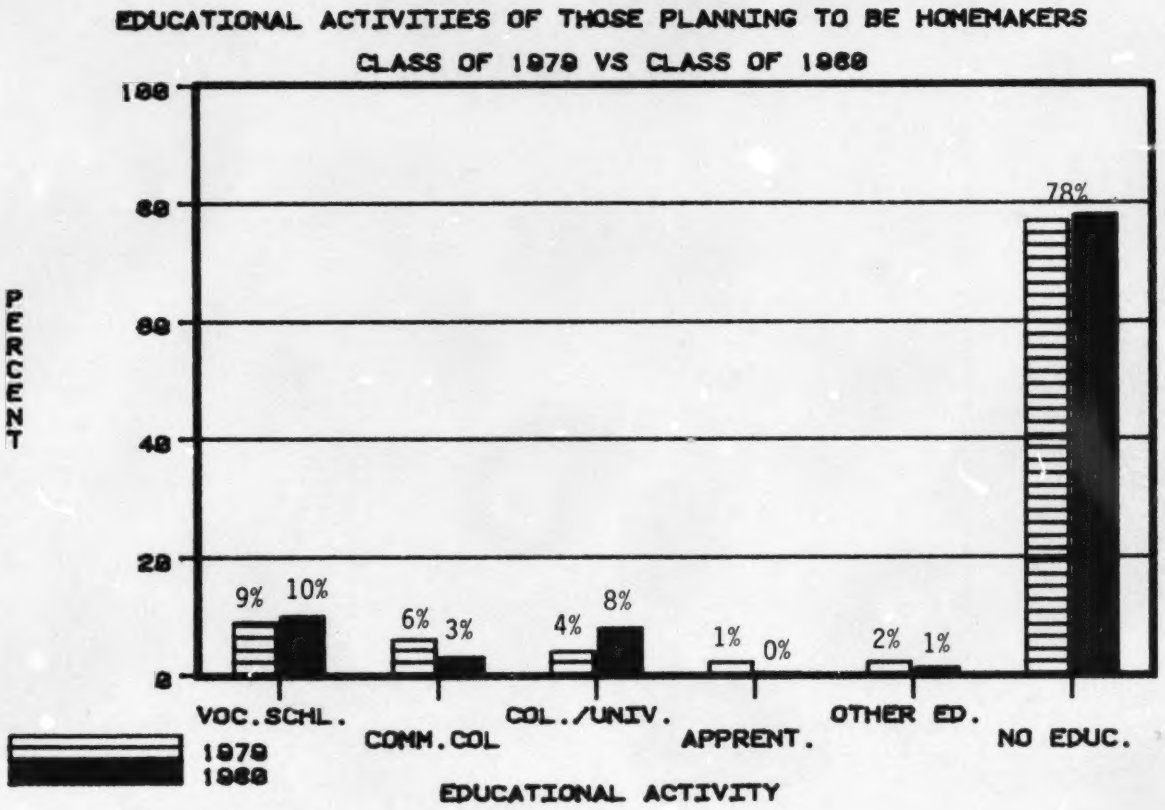
Figure 17



Employment Activities of Those Planning to be Homemakers

Two percent of each graduating class in this study planned to be homemakers one year after high school. This represents 126 individuals from the class of 1979 and 145 individuals from the class of 1980. Of those individuals who planned to be homemakers, approximately the same proportions from each class indicated this as their activity one year after high school. However, significant differences, as seen in Figure 17, were reported for the paid employment and no employment categories.

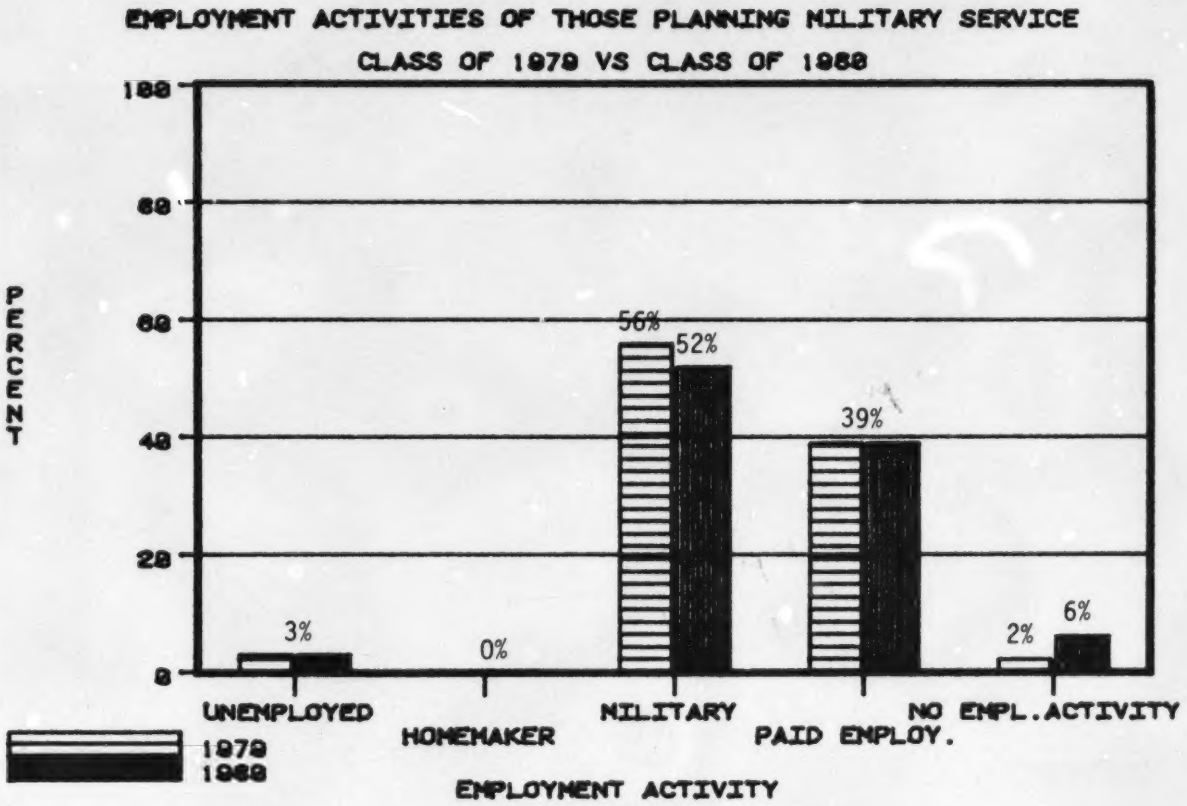
Figure 18



Educational Activities of Those Planning to be Homemakers

As can be seen in Figure 18, only 22 percent of those individuals from each graduating class who planned to be homemakers attended any type of school. The proportions attending each type showed slight variation between the two classes.

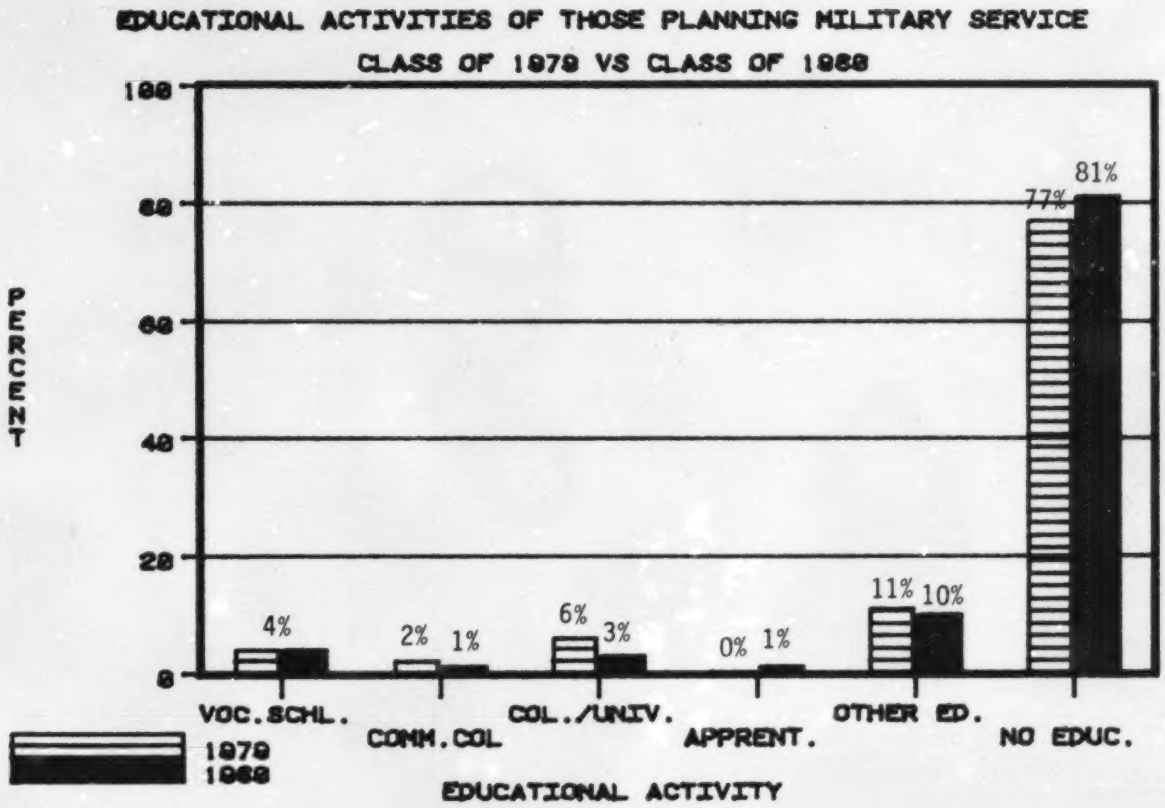
Figure 19



Employment Activities of Those Planning Military Service

Three percent from each class (234 from 1979 and 279 from 1980) indicated plans to enter the military service after high school. As shown in Figure 19, over 50 percent of the individuals from both classes who planned to enter the military actually entered military service and 39 percent of this group from both classes entered paid employment.

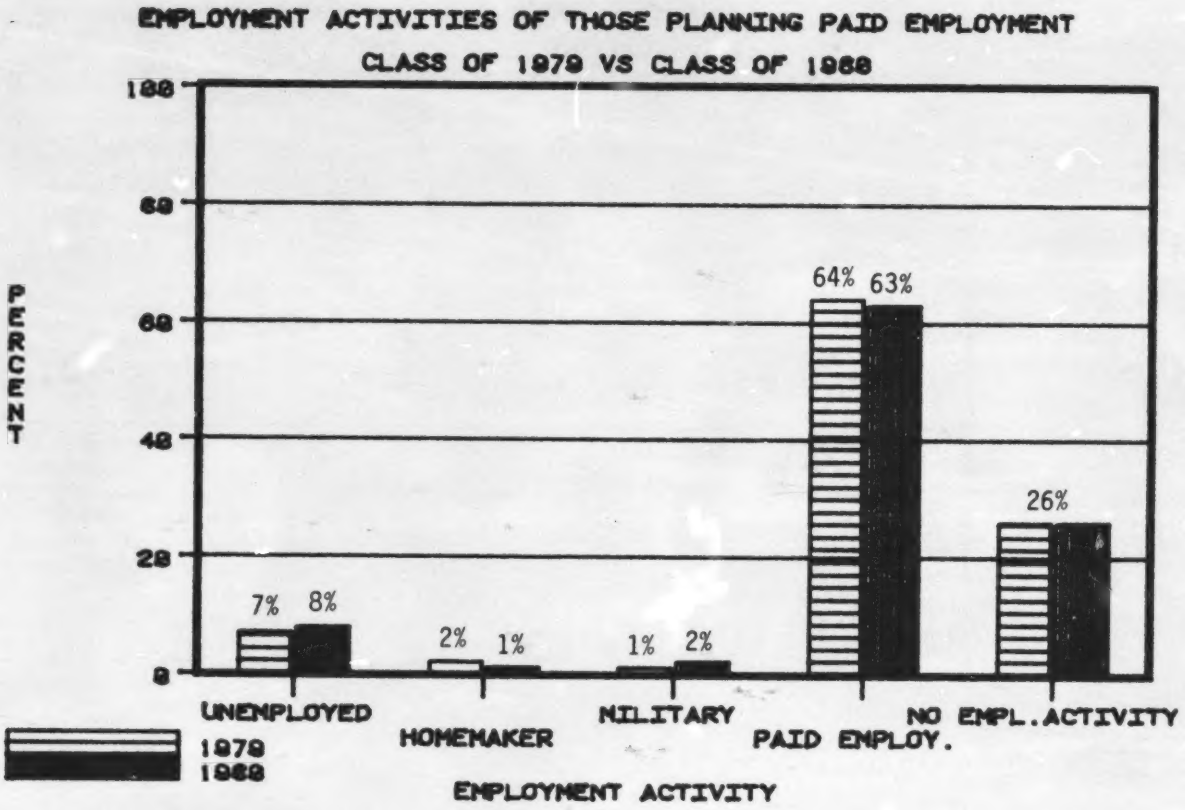
Figure 20



Educational Activities of Those Planning Military Service

As shown in Figure 20, 23 percent of those planning military service from the class of 1979 and 19 percent of that group from the class of 1980 were engaged in various education activities one year after high school. And as can be seen, there were only slight changes in the proportions in each education category.

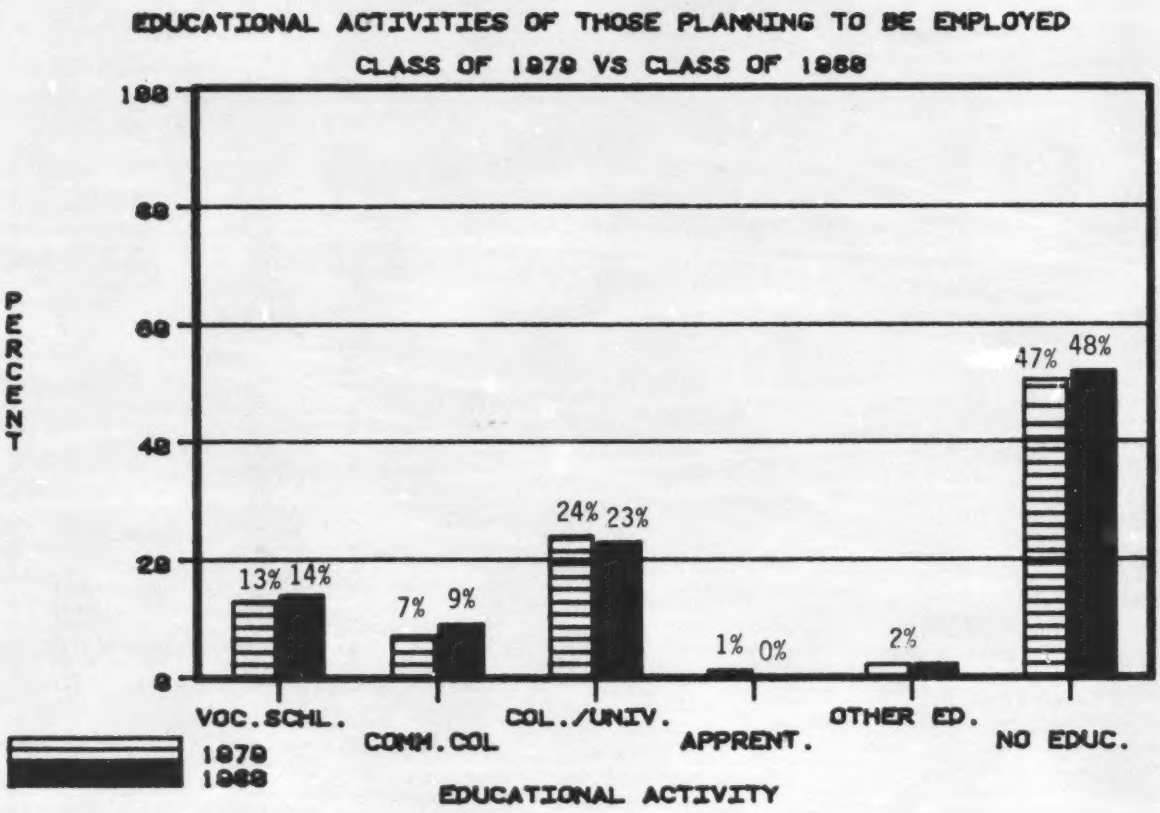
Figure 21



Employment Activities of Those Planning Paid Employment

Sixty-one percent (5,357) of the class of 1979 and 58 percent (5,646) of the class of 1980 indicated plans to be engaged in paid employment one year after high school. As can be seen in Figure 21, 64 percent and 63 percent of these groups, respectively, were engaged in paid employment as planned.

Figure 22



Educational Activities of Those Planning to be Employed

The education activities of those from each class who planned to enter paid employment are shown in Figure 22. As seen in this Figure, 53 percent and 51 percent of the classes of 1979 and 1980, respectively, were engaged in some type of educational activity. Few differences were evident between the two classes relative to the proportions in each activity.

SUMMARY OF EMPLOYMENT PLANS VERSUS ACTUAL EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES

For the individuals in the classes of 1979 and 1980, 86 percent and 87 percent, respectively, planned to be involved in an employment related activity. From the class of 1979, 56 percent of the individuals with employment related plans actually participated in their planned activities. For the class of 1980, the proportion was 54 percent.

The individuals most likely to enter their planned activity were those who planned "paid employment" (64 percent for 1979 and 63 percent for 1980).

Individuals from all other planned employment categories exhibited actual participation rates in planned activities of less than 30 percent. In addition, with the exception of those who planned to enter the military, a greater proportion of each planned activity group entered paid employment than entered the planned activity. This is also true of those who had no employment plans where 39 percent entered paid employment.

GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this report was to present information about the degree to which the educational and employment plans of high school seniors correspond to the actual activities in which these individuals engage one year after high school. The data reported were gathered from individuals who graduated from Minnesota high schools in 1979 and 1980.

The data for each of these graduating classes were compiled separately and, as presented earlier in this report, the classes were compared. While no tests of statistical significance were conducted, it was felt that these comparisons support the general conclusion that no practical difference existed in either the plans or the actual post high school activities of the students in the two classes. It was further concluded that there were no practical differences relative to the correspondence of planned versus actual activity of the individuals from these classes.

Based on the data presented in this report the following more specific conclusions were drawn:

1. Slightly over 80 percent of high school seniors have plans to pursue further education after high school.
2. Of the individuals with education plans; approximately 45 percent plan to attend colleges/universities, 32 percent plan to attend vocational schools, 13 percent plan to attend community colleges, and the remainder plan to enter apprenticeship or other education programs.
3. Only 62 percent of the individuals who planned education after high school were involved in any type of educational activity one year after school.
4. Of those individuals with educational plans, only 53 percent engaged in the type of education they planned.

5. Of the people planning to attend colleges or universities, approximately 75 percent were enrolled one year after high school.
6. About 45 percent of the people who planned to attend community colleges actually attend this type of school.
7. Approximately 40 percent of the individuals who had plans to go to vocational school were in vocational schools one year after high school.
8. Eighty-three percent of the high school seniors had plans to be involved in one of the employment related activities of unemployed (looking for work), homemaker, military or paid employment.
9. Of those with employment related plans, 17 percent planned to be unemployed and looking for work, 2 percent planned to be homemakers, 4 percent planned to enter the military service and 77 percent planned to be engaged in paid employment.
10. Seventy-two percent of the individuals who stated plans to be involved in one of the employment related activities reported involvement in one of these areas one year after high school.
11. Of the students with employment plans only 54 percent were engaged in the type of employment activity planned.
12. Fifteen percent of those who planned to be unemployed were actually unemployed one year after high school.
13. Of the individuals who planned to be homemakers, 28 percent reported being homemakers one year after high school.
14. Fifty-two percent of the people planning to enter the military were in the military one year after high school.
15. Of the people planning to be engaged in paid employment, 63 percent had paid jobs one year after high school.

16. At least 33 percent of those planning each of the employment related activities were engaged in paid employment.

Also, based on the data presented in this report, the following generalizations seem appropriate.

1. The degree of correspondence between the stated plans of high school seniors and their actual activity one year after high school varies greatly with the type of planned activity.
2. The overall correspondence between planned activities of high school seniors and actual activity one year after high school is relatively low (less than 50 percent).
3. Individuals who plan to attend colleges or universities are more likely than any other group to pursue their plans one year after high school.
4. High school seniors planning to be in apprenticeship programs are the least likely to pursue their planned activity.
5. The activity most often pursued but not planned is paid employment.